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CUENTOS

ARRANGEMENTS

RODRIGO JOSEPH RODRÍGUEZ

“Time to de-gay the house!” my partner declares.

Must we become someone else? It’s as if the infantry is stomping its way, en route, for our boarding boxcars and flatbed trucks.

We can become no one’s memory or history in an instant.

It seems so nauseous to concentrate on another season in time and rearrange ourselves and home for the coming guests for the holidays.

Guests invited and those unannounced shall appear before the WELCOME doormat.

We shall be arranged flowers: potted, poised, precise.

Every allowable object shall be in its place, so it sleeps well and looks, well, good on display in high style. No one’s deranged for this composition.

Photos of perfect and enduring matched couples such as men-at-arms and women hand-in-hand shall be removed. Everything’s prearranged—arranged, rearranged—like a union.

Oh, to be in love is to be rearranged!

Christmastime it is.

The mistletoe is not for our kind to command our lover, *Knock me a kiss; lead me to bliss. Bésame, bésame mucho, Papito, bajo este muérdago.*

No kisses in the house, but kisses to keep within until the coast is clear. What whirls we know not and much less what lurks around the corner, in cloaked legislative sessions.

Everything must be examined and reexamined for possible removal and hidden away for the time being until it is safe to be and assume who we are, our normality.

Only the essentials can stay; nothing else. But our infinite desires intoxicate our being.

Chaos reigns before we perform the glamour of living it easy for our familiar guests. Oh, family!

Quick, quick! The merry and gay magazine subscriptions must be removed and any hint of will, grace, and glee must flee from the public eye. Oops!—except a forgotten, favorite issue.

¿*Qué es esto?* she asks.

“Heavens! What’s this, dear?” another voice would say in horror, in another language, in other words.

We fail to notice that not everything can be stored away: behind curtains, zipped shut, boxed away in closets and other rooms.

We face the difficult: we run out of space.

Thus, we open the grand door of the finite temple we house.

Why must we not be our full selves? Why not embrace ourselves? Why not celebrate us and our ultimate lives as one?

We agree: the rearrangements come to an end this Christmastime.

We ride into a new year with a resolution to be ourselves.

So it has been spoken, and so it shall be done. And let it begin with me.